

Shawangunk Mountains to the Hudson River, were augmented soon by additional patents to the south. These lands were eventually divided among the twelve partners, their relatives, and a few friends into large plots—part wilderness and part farm. The farms were grouped principally around the heights west and east of the Walkkill River.

The area's commercial center was located on the east shore of the Walkkill River, where the Huguenots built wooden homes and later, stone houses. These houses were located on what is now known as Huguenot Street, the oldest continuously inhabited street in America. Many of the seventeenth century stone buildings still stand today and have been preserved as a museum community. The Huguenot Street Historic District has also been designated a National Historical Landmark.

The population of New Paltz gradually increased and moved up from the Walkkill River to what is now Main Street and beyond. Areas that are now incorporated into the nearby towns of Lloyd, Shawangunk, Esopus and Gardiner split off from the Town of New Paltz between 1843 and 1853. The Village of New Paltz was incorporated within the town in 1887. For 200 years after its settlement, New Paltz remained a small, isolated farming community. Farming, particularly of apples, is still one of New Paltz's largest businesses.

New Paltz farmers looked early on to surrounding communities and even to New York City for markets. Establishment of the Walkkill Valley Railroad in 1870 gave a great boost to their commercial efforts. After fifty years or so, the automobile began to replace the train, and finally, in the early 1950's, the opening of the New York State Thruway with an exit for New Paltz made this community much more accessible, leading to substantial growth in the town and at the University.

Higher education has long been one of the main concerns of the community, especially since 1828 when the New Paltz Classical School was established and, shortly thereafter, became the New Paltz Academy. This Academy slowly metamorphosed into the State University of New York (SUNY) at New Paltz, which continues to offer high quality education to thousands of undergraduate and graduate students each year. I would like to note I am a proud alumnus of SUNY New Paltz. I would also like to mention that SUNY's library is named after one of Ulster County's most famous residents, Sojourner Truth, the abolitionist and champion for women's suffrage, who lived in and around New Paltz for part of her life.

Over many generations, New Paltz's population has been enriched with a variety of races, faiths and ethnic backgrounds. New Paltz continues to uphold its long-held traditions of respect for diversity and civic involvement, while actively working to preserve its historic, cultural and scenic resources. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize and honor New Paltz as this community prepares to celebrate the 325th Anniversary of its founding and the 175th Anniversary of the founding of the College of New Paltz.

ENHANCING COOPERATION AND SHARING OF RESOURCES BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DOD

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1911. This bill authorizes the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to investigate ways to share resources to improve benefits and services, including health care, to veterans, service members, military retirees and their families.

As many of you may have read in the National Journal article of February 15, 2003, the relationship between William Beaumont Army Medical Center (WBAMC) and the VA outpatient clinic in my home district of El Paso, Texas is an excellent example of resource sharing. For years, a veteran in El Paso who needed specialized care had to be referred to the nearest full-service VA hospital, which happened to be a four hour drive away in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Today, a veteran can literally go next door to WBAMC. There, the VA is given access to expensive expertise and equipment, such as pathologists and MRI scans, and in return the VA reimburses the Army nearly \$5 million a year, well below the going rate for the medical care in the private sector.

I have urged both the DOD and the VA to build on our success story in El Paso and use this cooperation as a nationwide model. I hope my colleagues will join me in support of H.R. 1911. I yield back the balance of my time.

BOMBING IN RIYADH

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2003

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, as the investigation into the horrible bombing in Riyadh continues, I would commend to my colleagues' attention a column in the Wall Street Journal written by former FBI Director Louis Freeh about the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers complex in Saudi Arabia. It contains valuable lessons that should be applied to the probe of this latest attack. Cooperation between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia will be essential, as will the resolve that we have seen on the part of President Bush to bring terrorists to justice. As the article also demonstrates, the FBI needs our support for its critical mission of investigating and preventing terrorism in the U.S. and around the world.

[From the Wall Street Journal, May 20, 2003]

AMERICAN JUSTICE FOR OUR KHOBAR HEROES

(By Louis J. Freeh)

Responding to last week's terrorist attacks in Riyadh, President Bush declared that "the United States will find the killers, and they will learn the meaning of American justice." This is a president who is serious about fighting and winning the war on terrorism. The liberation of Iraq and the continued effort to bring al Qaeda to justice are all the proof anyone should need.

On May 1, our commander in chief stood on the flight deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln—where he rightly should stand—and reiterated the Bush doctrine: "Any person involved in committing or planning terrorist attacks against the American people becomes an enemy of this country, and a target of American justice." As if in response, Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, the leader of Iran's powerful Guardian Council, had this to say in a sermon the next day: "The Iraqi people have reached the conclusion that they have no option but to launch an uprising and resort to martyrdom operations to expel the United States from Iraq."

Impervious to the new order against terrorism are the terrorists who maintain their regime in Tehran. While the horrific bombing scenes were still smoldering and littered with their victims in Riyadh, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami received a rousing welcome in Beirut, where he vowed to support "resistance" against Israel and called the U.S. occupation of Iraq a "great mistake" and a "dangerous game." Meanwhile, Mr. Khatami's atomic-energy chief denied that Iran had a nuclear weapons program but told the U.N. that his country was not willing to submit to tougher inspections.

Make no mistake, Iran's terrorist leaders are well versed in "martyrdom operations" against Americans. Hezbollah, the exclusive terrorist agent of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has killed more Americans than any other group besides al Qaeda. In 1982, Hezbollah carried out the suicide bombing in Beirut that killed 241 U.S. Marines. In 1985, Hezbollah brutally murdered a young U.S. Navy diver aboard their hijacked TWA Flight 847 in Lebanon and dumped his body on the tarmac. Into the 1990s Hezbollah terrorists kidnapped, tortured and murdered several American military and civilian officers as well as other Westerners.

On June 25, 1996, Iran again attacked America at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, exploding a huge truck bomb that devastated Khobar Towers and murdered 19 U.S. airmen as they rested in their dormitory. These young heroes spent every day risking their lives enforcing the no-fly zone over southern Iraq; that is, protecting Iraqi Shiites from their own murderous tyrant. When I visited this horrific scene soon after the attack, I watched dozens of dedicated FBI agents combing through the wreckage in 120-degree heat, reverently handling the human remains of our brave young men. More than 400 of our Air Force men and women were wounded in this well-planned attack, and I was humbled by their courage and spirit. I later met with the families of our lost Khobar heroes and promised that we would do whatever was necessary to bring these terrorists to American justice. The courage and dignity these wonderful families have consistently exemplified has been one of the most powerful experiences of my 26 years of public service.

The FBI's investigation of the Khobar attack was extraordinarily persistent, indeed relentless. Our fallen heroes and their families deserve nothing less. Working in close cooperation with the White House, State Department, CIA and Department of Defense, I made a series of trips to Saudi Arabia beginning in 1996. FBI agents opened an office in Riyadh and aligned themselves closely with the Mababeh, the kingdom's antiterrorist police. Over the course of our investigation the evidence became clear that while the attack was staged by Saudi Hezbollah members, the entire operation was planned, funded and coordinated by Iran's security services, the IRGC and MOIS, acting on orders from the highest levels of the regime in Tehran.

In order to return an indictment and bring these terrorists to American justice, it became essential that FBI agents be permitted to interview several of the participating Hezbollah terrorists who were detained in Saudi Arabia. The purpose of the interviews was to confirm—with usable, co-conspirator testimonial evidence—the Iranian complicity that Saudi Ambassador Prince Bandar bin Sultan and the Mabaheth had already relayed to us. (For the record, the FBI's investigation only succeeded because of the real cooperation provided by Prince Bandar and our colleagues in the Mabaheth.) FBI agents had never before been permitted to interview first-hand Saudis detained in the kingdom.

Unfortunately, the White House was unable or unwilling to help the FBI gain access to these critical witnesses. The only direction from the Clinton administration regarding Iran was to order the FBI to stop photographing and fingerprinting official Iranian delegations entering the U.S. because it was adversely impacting our "relationship" with Tehran. We had argued that the MOIS was using these groups to infiltrate its agents into the U.S.

After months of inaction, I finally turned to the former President Bush, who immediately interceded with Crown Prince Abdullah on the FBI's behalf. Mr. Bush personally asked the Saudis to let the FBI do one-on-one interviews of the detained Khobar bombers. The Saudis immediately acceded. After Mr. Bush's Saturday meeting with the Crown Prince in Washington, Ambassador Wyche Fowler, Dale Watson, the FBI's excellent counterterrorism chief, and I were summoned to a Monday meeting where the crown prince directed that the FBI be given direct access to the Saudi detainees. This was the investigative breakthrough for which we had been waiting for several years.

Mr. Bush typically disclaimed any credit for his critical intervention but he earned the gratitude of many FBI agents and the Khobar families. I quickly dispatched the FBI case agents back to Saudi Arabia, where they interviewed, one-on-one, six of the Hezbollah members who actually carried out the attack. All of them directly implicated the IRGC, MOIS and senior Iranian government officials in the planning and execution of this attack. Armed with this evidence, the FBI recommended a criminal indictment that would identify Iran as the sponsor of the Khobar bombing. Finding a problem for every solution, the Clinton administration refused to support a prosecution.

The prosecution and criminal indictment for these murders had to wait for a new administration. In February 2001, working with exactly the same evidence but with a talented new prosecutor, James B. Comey Jr. (now U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York), Attorney General John Ashcroft's personal intervention, and White House support, the case was presented to a grand jury. On June 21, 2001, only four days before some of the terrorist charges would have become barred by the five-year statute of limitations, the grand jury indicted 13

Hezbollah terrorists for the Khobar attack and identified Iran as the sponsor.

Nonetheless, the terrorists who murdered 19 U.S. airmen and wounded hundreds more have yet to be brought to American justice. Whenever U.S. diplomats hold talks with representatives of Iran's Islamic government, Khobar Towers should be the top item on their agenda. The arrest and turnover to U.S. authorities of Ahman Ibrahim Al-Mughassil and Ali Saed bin Ali Al-Houri, two of the indicted Hezbollah leaders of the Khobar attack believed to be in Iran, should be part of any "normalization" discussion. Furthermore, access and accountability by IRGC, MOIS and other senior Iranian government leaders for their complicity in the attack should be nonnegotiable.

Before his appointment as the top U.S. administrator in Iraq, L. Paul Bremer chaired the National Commission on Terrorism, which studied the Khobar attack. The commission concluded that "Iran remains the most active state supporter of terrorism. . . . The IRBC and MOIS have continued to be involved in the planning and execution of terrorist acts. They also provide funding, training, weapons, logistical resources, and guidance to a variety of terrorist groups, including Hezbollah, Hamas, PIJ, and PFLP-GC." The commission noted that "in October 1999, President Clinton officially requested cooperation [a letter delivered through a third-party government] from Iran in the investigation [of the Khobar bombing]. Thus far, Iran has not responded. International pressure in the Pan Am 103 case ultimately succeeded in getting some degree of cooperation from Libya. The United States government has not sought similar multilateral action to bring pressure on Iran to cooperate in the Khobar Towers bombing investigation."

One of my last official acts as FBI director was to attend a memorial service at Arlington National Cemetery with the 19 stoic Air Force families with whom I had become very close. They all came to my office to thank the FBI for keeping faith with them and presented me with a signed plaque. It will always be for me the most cherished honor of my public service.

Yesterday the White House reiterated Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recent statement that al Qaeda leaders are now conducting their operations from Iran. The time to bring that pressure to bear is right now, with Ambassador Bremer and our armed forces bringing democracy and justice to the Iraqi people next door. This time the United States should not just send Tehran a letter. American justice for our 19 Khobar heroes is long overdue.

PEACE IN SRI LANKA

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise on the House floor this evening to express my con-

cerns about the pause in peace negotiations between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), also known as the Tamil Tigers. I would also like to reiterate my full support for peace talks between both sides to resume.

Mr. Speaker, Sri Lanka is a country that has suffered the tremendous loss of nearly 65,000 lives due to a longstanding internal conflict between Sri Lankans and the LTTE. On February 22, 2002, a groundbreaking ceasefire agreement was brokered by the Norwegian government and signed by both the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE. At that time, we all wished for a successful peace process and both sides were committed to working towards the end goal of peace.

Although the agreement was fairly structured, a peace process can only proceed when all parties act on good faith and adhere to the agreed ceasefire accord. Unfortunately, the LTTE has recently withdrawn from the peace process and is boycotting the continued peace talks to be held in June in Japan at the Tokyo Donor Conference.

Mr. Speaker, the LTTE has said they will not participate in the Tokyo Donor Conference in protest over their exclusion from the preliminary conference held in Washington in April. The U.S. State Department did not invite the LTTE to the preliminary conference in Washington due to the fact that they remain on the State Department list of terrorist organizations.

Mr. Speaker, both sides claim violations of the ceasefire agreement. According to Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), many violations have been made by the LTTE since the cease-fire agreement. For example, the LTTE is still recruiting child soldiers, the LTTE has attacked the Sri Lankan Navy and a Chinese trawler, and the LTTE actively attempts to import arms, which have subsequently been intercepted by the Sri Lankan Navy.

The LTTE rebels also criticized the Sri Lankan military for its continued occupation of Tamil homes, schools, places of worship and other public buildings in violation of the ceasefire agreement.

I feel strongly that if the LTTE returns to the peace talks and participates in the Tokyo Donor Conference, a peaceful resolution between both sides can be worked out. The United States and countries around the world are concerned and would like to see the long process of building peace in Sri Lanka continue on a timely basis.

Mr. Speaker, the signed ceasefire offers a window of opportunity for peace in Sri Lanka and I encourage the LTTE to recognize and utilize this unique opportunity for working towards peace and stability.